the various false religions which have appeared in the world, there are always to be found some of those conceptions which enter Into the true idea. All religions exhibit some part of the truth, being that which the human heart was led to fix on in the circumstances. False and defective religions have, under the guidance of human nature, singled out merely those properties of God which impressed that nature, while in revelation we have the complete figure, drawn evidently by persons to whom God had immediately revealed himself.

In particular, we find, in all religions which have recommended themselves to large bodies of mankind, and which have exercised a powerful influence upon the human mind—a deep impression of man having rendered himself obnoxious by transgression to a God who has prescribed a moral law, and is offended by disobedience. The prevalence of such a sentiment shows how deeply it is seated in the human heart, and how unfitted philosophical theism (which provides nothing piacular) is to meet the felt wants of mankind. While the Scriptures have not overlooked this property of the Divine nature, they have stripped ii of all the offensive adjuncts with which it is usually associated, and combined it with all those lofty natural perfections which the philosopher delights to contemplate, and with a love as unbounded and tender as the sentiments of man's heart have ever conceived; thus revealing a combination, of each part of which, the understanding, the conscience, and the affections are constrained to approve, but which, notwithstanding, has never been so exhibited, in its completeness, by the highest efforts of unaided reason.